

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION IN CHILD, YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

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Editor's Note

Research and Evaluation in Child, Youth, and Family Services seeks to advance the principles of social justice and transformative child welfare through robust inquiry. It achieves this by fostering collaborative partnerships among researchers, agencies, and communities to highlight evidence-informed policies, programs, and services that aim to enhance the well-being of children, youth, and families within diverse social contexts. Volume 6 is comprised of four journal articles completed by a total of 12 MSW students. One study titled *Democratizing Child Welfare Policy Unveiling Intersectionality*, completed by Kristi Pinderi is not published in this issue because it aims for peer review publication in another journal.

Examining Support Needs for Children, Youth and Caregivers in Kinship/Out-of-Care Arrangements was conducted by Grace Pegg, Geraldo Palomino, and Angel Thomas in collaboration between MCFD and Fairness for Children Raised by Relatives, a non-profit registered society of kinship caregivers across the province of British Columbia. This qualitative study used thematic analysis and revealed two main themes relating to the complex demands of caregiving and kinship caregivers feeling alone. Kinship caregivers face significant challenges, including financial strain, lack of access to resources, and feelings of ostracization. Despite these challenges, kinship caregivers express reward and blessing in their caregiving role. Disparities between kinship and foster caregivers, highlights the need for more support and access to resources; and the importance of culturally relevant support and training programs to address the diverse needs of kinship caregivers and the children/youth in their care.

At Home Program Medical Benefits was conducted by Tala Endacott, Carmen Chan, Aisha Ismail. Three focus groups were conducted with healthcare providers and AHP Medical Benefits staff, revealing discrepancies in interpreting "basic" and "medically necessary" equipment. Participants found the adjudication process to be lengthy and unclear, thus negatively impacting access to benefits. Recommendations from focus group participants include clearer definitions, increased funding, and hiring healthcare professionals as AHP Medical Benefits staff.

Beyond Compliance: Exploring Quality In-Person Private Visits with Children and Youth in Care was conducted by Eva Barker, Shay Bernier O'Kane, Abbie Campbell. This research was in response to child welfare audits published by MCFD which found that Children and Youth in Care (CYiC) were not always seen by workers in accordance with policy guidelines. This study used an explanatory, inductive, mixed-method approach and found that although workers indicated they were completing visits with CYiC as per policy, they encountered significant barriers. Moreover, workers believed seeing CYiC once every 90 days



was insufficient to assess safety or build meaningful relationships. The project offers some policy and practice considerations for in-person private visits with children and youth in care.

Clinicians' Experience, Successes and Barriers in Applying Culturally Safe Practices at Intake and Initial Assessment in Ministry of Children and Family Development Child and Youth Mental Health Services in British Columbia: A Mixed Methods Design was conducted by Catherine Byler, Kemorie Drysdale, Rebecca Hargreaves. This mixed methods study found that clinician participants developed strategies to apply a culturally safe approach with the children, youth and families accessing mental health services. However, there is a need for additional and more frequent or alternative cultural safety training. Participants noted that Indigenous and refugee populations experienced more barriers to accessing CYMH services which includes a history of oppression, the impact of stigma and racism, and the co-location of CYMH services with child protection services. Policy and practice considerations are offered.

The conclusions, interpretations and views expressed in these articles belong to the author(s) as individuals and may not represent the ultimate position of the Ministry of Children and Family Development. We hope you enjoy this volume of research articles and that it can help inform research, policies, program development, and practices. If you have any questions about any of the research projects, please contact me at b.lee@ubc.ca.

Sincerely,

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